

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/032,385

Examiner

Catherine S. Williams

Applicant(s)

MOUTAFIS ET AL.

Art Unit

3763

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to 7/30/04.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 23-29, 31-34 and 56.
3. ☒ The drawings filed on 25 October 2001 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
 - * Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
6. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☒ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date 6/24/02
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____.
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Michael Pomianek on 11/1/2004.

The application has been amended as follows:

In the claims:

In claim 29 line 3, --single—was inserted between “creating a” and “liquid jet”.

In claim 29 line 9, --by creating an entrainment region—was inserted between “the evacuation lumen” and the period “.”

In claims 31 and 56 line 4, --single—was inserted between “creating a” and “liquid jet”.

In claims 31 and 56 line 7, --of the surgical liquid-jet instrument—was inserted between “evacuation lumen” and the semi-colon “;”

In claims 31 and 56 line 11, --by creating an entrainment region—was inserted between “source of suction” and the semi-colon “;”

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 23-29 and 31-34 and 56 are allowed.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The prior art fails to teach a method including the combination of the steps of inserting a surgical liquid-jet instrument into a joint capsule of a patient, a creating a single liquid jet with the surgical liquid-jet instrument and directing the liquid jet towards a jet-receiving opening in an evacuation lumen of the surgical liquid-jet instrument, cutting or ablating a selected tissue within the joint capsule with the liquid jet and removing liquid comprising the liquid jet and the selected tissue from the joint capsule without applying a source of external suction in fluid communication with the evacuation lumen by creating an entrainment region.

The prior art also fails to teach a method including the combination of the steps of positioning a surgical liquid-jet instrument in close proximity to a surface of a body of a patient comprising an external body surface, creating a single liquid jet in a surrounding gaseous environment with the surgical liquid-jet instrument, directing the liquid jet adjacent to the surface and towards a jet-receiving opening in an evacuation lumen of the instrument, debriding a material from the surface with the liquid jet and evacuating a liquid comprising the liquid jet and the debrided material from the jet receiving opening to a proximal end of the evacuation lumen without the need from an external source of suction by creating an entrainment region.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

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Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Catherine S. Williams whose telephone number is 703-308-4846. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Nicholas D. Lucchesi can be reached on 703-308-2698. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Catherine S. Williams *CW*.
October 25, 2004


NICHOLAS D. LUCCHESI
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 376